TWENTIETH

# ANNUAL ADDRESS

AND REPORT

—:TO THE:—

# MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,

—:BY:—

**A. S. HALLIDIE, President.**

Delivered at their Rooms, June 10th, 1876.

SAN FRANCISCO:
KANE & COOK, Printers, 412 Commercial Street.
1876.

THE

# Mechanics' Institute,

ORGANIZED MARCH 29, 1855.

*Incorporated Dec. 6, 1869.*

BUILDING OF THE ASSOCIATION, No. 27 POST ST.

Library Hours, 9 A. M. to 10 P. M.

Terms of Membership:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Initiation Fee, on entering,* | *$1.00* |
| *Quarterly Dues, in advance,* | *1.50* |
| *Life Membership,* | *50.00* |

(Entitling the person to all the privileges of Membership.)

**OFFICERS—1876.**

A. S. HALLIDIE, President.
P. B. CORNWALL, Vice-President.
H. L. DAVIS, Treasurer.
D. E. HAYES, Recording Secretary.
JAS. SPIERS, Corresponding Secretary.

**TRUSTEES.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Geo. Spaulding, | A. R. Wells, | Charles Elliot, |
| J. H. Stoutenborough, | James Drury, | D. E. Hayes, |
| H. S. Smith, | Jeremiah Browning, | James B. Stetson. |

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# To the Members of the Mechanics' Institute.

It cannot be said that the City of San Francisco does not possess its share of societies engaged in benevolent and literary work, and while the growth of the City has been of marvelous rapidity, the institutions of learning and of progress have kept pace with this growth. Yet a visitor is impressed that a city so renowned for its liberality as San Francisco, should be without a large free public library; and it is hard to account for the fact, because from the liberality displayed in fostering the free public schools, and kindred institutions, it would seem that the same sentiment and same spirit would carry itself so far as to found a free library for the people. If this is the sentiment of the conductors of such an institution as this, it may be asked, why do you not attempt to make this free? The answer is, that unfortunately such a library, reading room and their appendages, cannot be carried on without pecuniary aid; that even with the most rigid economy the expenses are always in excess of the legitimate revenues; and the rapid growth of the City requires an equal growth of the library, involving expenditure for books far beyond the revenues derived from fees and membership dues. And the only remedy lies with those who are able and willing to devote part of their fortune to sustaining such an institution for the public good. The value of such a library as you possess cannot be overestimated, and it is a source of much gratification that you can point to your shelves, and say that they contain a greater number of books of real practical value than any library west of the Rocky Mountains. By recent addition of exceedingly valuable books, you have been compelled to absorb the whole of the second floor for library purposes, and the additions made have been of a substantial character, giving to your library a character and standing that cannot be impaired as long as your officers are

faithful to their trust. By these additions to your library, the Reading Room has been pressed up-stairs, on the third floor; one story higher than it should be for comfort, but unavoidable under the circumstances, and bringing before us the fact, in a striking manner, that our accommodations are not equal to our requirements. Hence we should look around for other quarters, and try and provide ourselves with a suitable piece of land, before the value thereof rises too high.

The Trustees have been diligent in this matter, and have given it their grave attention, feeling that the time is drawing very close when we must seriously make a move in that direction.

The Building of the future should enable you more fully to carry out the objects for which this Institute was organized, the most important of which are "the mutual improvement of its members, the establishment of a Library, a Museum, a Reading Room, the formation of classes, and delivery of lectures for tuition," so that such facilities may be afforded by that building, that you may make this an educational institution, devoted to progress in the Mechanic Arts. In your rooms should be discussed any subject of public interest belonging to the industries, improvement in Engineering, or in Mechanical device, the consideration of great public works, or contemplated improvement, and such kindred subjects. In this body are men of ability in every department of art and science, and I do not see why there could not be a legitimate interest created among the members by the discussion, for instance, of the question of the Sewerage system of this City; the grade of an important street, like Montgomery Avenue; the paving of streets; the work of the Park Commissioners, and such like questions that should be considered and discussed without partiality or prejudice, and avoiding, as you have done heretofore, anything of the character of politics or religion. The custom of a majority of other Societies, of reading papers on appropriate subjects at monthly meetings, might be advantageously followed by this, yet I am aware it is somewhat difficult to arouse an interest of this kind in such a nervous community, so much devoted to speculation and consideration of personal prosperity. The Society of Engineers, organized in the interest of Engineering, seems to have died of inanition, and



such a result is not encouraging in this respect; but I have no doubt if a few of the members of the Mechanics' Institute, identified with certain of the industries, or of the arts, were to consult together, they would be able to put in practical shape a project, with the view of discussing the subject of papers to be submitted to stated meetings.

A good substantial periodical, devoted to the interest of Engineering and the Arts, edited with ability and singleness of mind, and printed on good paper, would be advantageous to this community, and could give tone to public opinion by building up a home interest in industrial affairs.

As before stated, your Trustees find it exceedingly difficult to keep pace with the progress of the City, requiring on your behalf a constant heavy expenditure for high cost standard books of Reference, without which the Library would fall back into neglect and decay. Our expenditure on the Library for books and book-binding, reached about $14,000 last year, and yet with this expenditure, which seems large in the extreme, the members are needing additional books, which to your Library are a necessity, and the committee having the matter in charge are constantly deploring the want of funds to buy more books.

The various changes in this Building considered necessary by the Trustees, and which consist of the transfer of the Reading Room up-stairs, the fitting up of the old reading room into a Library of Reference, the entire remodelling of the first floor by the enlargement of stores and utilization of basement story, the repainting of the interior halls and the front of the Building, will involve an expenditure of about $12,000 or $13,000. In order to meet this, a loan has been effected with the Union Insurance Company, of $17,000, at nine per cent. per annum. The old Mortgage, which bore interest at ten per cent., has been canceled, by the payment of $5,000, balance due on it. The entire various alterations are about completed, and the two stores and basements are now to let at a reasonable rent.

The new stores are about ninety feet deep, average width of thirty-two feet, and height of eighteen feet. The basements are

same size, and about twelve feet high. The sidewalks were excavated, a strong brick bulkhead built, giving a great deal of room, sidewalk elevators being fitted thereto.

In view of the fact of the overcrowded condition and inconvenience of the present Building, I would suggest to this meeting that it should, by resolution, express its opinion as to the advisability of seeking a new location and erecting a more convenient building, which I believe should, if the finances of the Institute permit it, be devoted exclusively to the purposes of this Society.

The Board of Managers of the Eleventh Industrial Exhibition have announced an Industrial Exhibition, commemorative of the centennary of this Nation, to be open in the Pavilion, under the auspices of this Society, on the 8th day of August next. It is the intention of the managers to make this Exhibition in keeping with the events of this year, to surround it with all the *eclat* of previous Fairs, relying upon your co-operation and the aid of the people of this good city, to make it a success in proportion to the extent of the undertaking.

I would here remark, and reiterate the statement made so often before, that although these Industrial Fairs are held for the benefit and under the auspices of this Society, there is not a dollar of money belonging to the Mechanics' Institute so far invested in these enterprises; that the money necessary for these Exhibitions has been furnished by the managers and friends of the Institute, who wait for the return of their loan, and without interest, until the Fairs have paid all expenses for labor and material. After refunding these loans, and paying off all liabilities of these Fairs, then the managers turn into the treasury of this Society every dollar of surplus.

Under the By-Laws of this Society, "No debt of any kind shall be incurred, except for the erection of buildings and purchase of property for Library purposes," which is sufficient reason why this Society cannot incur any liability in connection with the holding of Fairs. And again, the holding of Fairs, when buildings have to be constructed on leased ground, is a



dangerous operation, even under the most careful management. The Third Industrial Fair, held before your By-Laws were revised, brought you heavily in debt, the last installment of which was paid off by the receipts of the Seventh Fair. The receipts of the last (Tenth) Fair enabled the managers to pay off fifty per cent. of the borrowed money, and to donate to this Society $5,316.06. With hard work, emphatic energy, strict economy and good management, the Eleventh Industrial Exhibition should pay off all the indebtedness of the Board of Managers, and leave a small surplus to be turned over to the Society. *Is it, therefore, too much to ask the active co-operation of every member of the Mechanics' Institute in making the forthcoming Fair a success?* And I may here suggest how you can do this:

*First.* Help to secure a thorough representation of the industries and natural resources of this State, so as to make the Exhibition instructive as well as attractive. There is no difficulty in filling up the building, but the managers desire to have the exhibits as choice as possible.

*Secondly.* Talk with your friends and neighbors about it, and if you can get a good idea suggest it to the managers, by addressing the Secretary.

*Thirdly.* Use your utmost endeavors to sell season tickets of admission. And I would observe that almost our whole revenue is derived from the sale of admission tickets, there being no charge for exhibiting space.

The conducting of these Industrial Fairs is attended with a vast amount of labor, and it is only the sense of desire to do some public good that sustains the managers in their labor, which is entirely of voluntary service. By the request of many leading citizens of San Francisco, and the hope of lightening the burden of debt, and increasing the efficiency of this Society, the managers have been induced to hold a Fair this year as a Centennial Celebration. Let us then join in our efforts to make on this Pacific Coast an appropriate celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of this Nation's birth. There can be no doubt of the success of the forthcoming Fair, for more space is applied for at this date than was last year; but we do not want to stop at ordinary success on an occasion like this.

It has become customary in this Annual Report of your President to refer in a general way to the material advances made in the industries and in public works. I find that, on account of great pressure of other affairs, I must omit this, except, perhaps, so far as to refer to the excellent work done by the Park Commissioners, in laying out and reclaiming the sandy and forbidding soil, which, by their careful management and patient experiments, has become a spot of beauty and an ornament to this City. The Golden Gate Park bids fair to outrival any park in the United States, as to extent and natural beauties. The volunteer service of the Commissioners, and excellent results of their Engineer, J. Hammond Hall's skill, deserve more than passing mention, and I join in the general feeling in expressing my regret that the work is in danger of serious interruption by the resignation of the Commissioners and their Engineer, than whom no citizens in this community command more respect.

Your Society, by the acquisition of the Patent Report—the gift of the British Government—and various other valuable works which you see on the shelves around you, are now in position to command the attention of all those engaged in the industries on this Coast.

During the past year you have added to your Library 5,664 volumes, classified as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Science and Art, | 4,392 | |
| Fiction, | 727 | |
| General Literature and Essays, | 90 | |
| Biography, | 51 | |
| History, | 83 | |
| Poetry and Drama, | 51 | |
| Travels, | 41 | |
| Law and Political Economy, | 6 | |
| Theology and Religion, | 7 | |
| Encyclopedias and Dictionaries, | 19 | |
| Philosophy, | 6 | |
| Sundries, | 23 | |
| Donations, Books and Pamphlets, | 168 | |
| | | 5,664 |



Which, added to the number of Books as per last Report, will make a total of 27,206 volumes. The number withdrawn from the Library averages 7,840 per month, or 94,080 during the year.

During the year 723 ordinary and 10 life members have joined the Society, and the total number of members is estimated at 2,000.

During the past winter a course of lectures was delivered, which was well attended and successful.

The financial condition of the Society for the year ending May 31, 1876, is as follows:

## *GENERAL FUND.*

### RECEIPTS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Rent, | $ 8,411 48 |
| Membership Dues, | 6,755 15 |
| State Warrant, | 1,425 00 |
| Managers Tenth Fair, | 5,316 06 |
| Life Membership Fund, | 2,050 00 |
| Loan from Union Insurance Co., | 17,000 00 |
| Balance on hand May 31, 1875, | 316 23 |
| TOTAL, | $41,273 92 |

### DISBURSEMENTS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Insurance, | $ 764 85 |
| Old Mortgage, Union Ins. Co., | 5,000 00 |
| Law Expense, settlement of Urton Case, | 500 00 |
| Interest, | 789 04 |
| Books, | 12,463 06 |
| Periodicals and Newspapers, | 1,508 74 |
| Book Binding, | 565 40 |
| Advertising, | 219 65 |
| Furniture and Supplies, | 1,111 80 |
| Sundries, Books, Stationery, Etc., | 1,185 55 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Water, | | 120 00 |
| Gas, | | 1,303 64 |
| Discount on Silver, | | 44 28 |
| Improvement and Repairs, | | 7,561 00 |
| Printing, | | 291 50 |
| Salaries, and Commission on Collecting, | | 5,250 07 |
| Sinking Fund, | | 1,506 62 |
| TOTAL, | | $40,188 20 |
| Leaving Balance in Treasury this date, | | $1,085 72 |

## *SINKING FUND.*

### RECEIPTS.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Balance on hand May 31, 1875, | $1,621 78 | |
| Ten per cent. of the Receipts for the Year, | 1,506 62 | |
| TOTAL, | | $3,128 40 |

### DISBURSEMENTS.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Real Estate Taxes, 1875–6, | $1,284 00 | |
| Personal Property, State Proportion, | 60 50 | |
| Personal Property, Federal, | 100 00 | |
| TOTAL, | | $1,444 50 |
| Leaving Balance in Sinking Fund this date, | | $1,683 90 |



*Assets and Liabilities of the Society are Estimated as follows:*

### ASSETS.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lot and Building, Post Street, | | $130,000 00 | |
| Library, | | 40,000 00 | |
| Fixtures and Furniture, | | 6,000 00 | |
| Cash, in General Fund, | $1,085 72 | | |
| " Sinking Fund, | 1,683 90 | | |
| " Librarian's hands, | 455 73 | | |
| Dues, Unpaid and Collectible, | 600 00 | | |
| | | 3,825 35 | |
| TOTAL, | | | $179,825 35 |

### LIABILITIES.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Union Insurance Company, | $17,000 00 | |
| Bills not Paid, | 1,967 00 | |
| Due Contractor on acceptance of Building, | 3,600 00 | |
| | | 22,567 00 |
| NET ASSETS, | | $157,258 35 |

In finishing this Report, I would observe that we have had many extraordinary expenses, but have been fortunate in receiving funds from some unanticipated sources. That your building is now in excellent condition to bring in an increased revenue, and will need little alteration or repairs for two or three years. That the increasing popularity of this Society must be a source of great satisfaction to the Members and Trustees, who, I am sure, will unite in the determination to press on in the forward march of progress and improvement, keeping time with events, and anticipating wants.

A. S. HALLIDIE,
*President.*

# ELEVENTH INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION

OF THE

# Mechanics' Institute,

## SAN FRANCISCO, 1876.

The Exhibition will open August 8th. Premiums of Gold and Silver Medals, Diplomas and Certificates of Merit will be awarded.

In order to secure space, application should be made on or before July 20th.

Information regarding the Exhibition can be obtained by applying personally or by letter, to the Secretary, 27 Post Street.

The Pavilion will be open for the reception of goods, Monday, July 24th.

No charge is made for space or steam power.

### OFFICERS.

| | |
|---|---|
| *President,* | A. S. HALLIDIE. |
| *Vice-President,* | P. B. CORNWALL. |
| *Treasurer,* | HENRY L. DAVIS. |
| *Secretary,* | J. H. CULVER. |
| *Corresponding Secretary,* | JAMES SPIERS. |
| *Superintendent,* | J. H. GILMORE. |

J. C. PATRICK,
GEORGE SPAULDING,
JAMES DRURY,
D. E. HAYES.
H. S. SMITH,
ASA R. WELLS,
CHARLES ELLIOT,
JAS. B. STETSON.
JEREMIAH BROWNING.
J. H. STOUTENBOROUGH.